



Charlotte Mason's House of Education,  
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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"OURSELVES, OUR SOULS AND BODIES."  
*Book of Common Prayer.*

"Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control."—Tennyson.

BY THE EDITOR.

THE HOUSE OF HEART.—PART II.

I.

WE have said that two potent personages hold rule in the House of Heart—Love and Justice. The question occurs, do not the claims of the two clash? They do sometimes. Love leans to leniency and injures where it should sustain. Justice leans to severity and repels where it should win. Therefore it is necessary for us to think on these things and con the rôles of Love and Justice at least as carefully as we should con a Greek verb or a problem in Euclid. Indeed these latter we can live without, but Love and Justice are inseparable from Mansoul; they are there and we must take count of them. Not that they are as self-adjusting wheels, so to speak, which go right whether we will or no. On the contrary, these Lords of the Bosom require the continual supervision of the Prime Minister and the other higher powers; and without such over-looking they produce tangles in the lives of men.

We have already considered the ways of Love and the various offices of his Lords-in-waiting. Let us now think upon Justice, and who they are who surround his seat and carry out his mandates. First let us realise our wealth. It is a great thing to know that there is not a Mansoul in the world, however mean or unconsidered, neglected or savage, who has not Justice in his heart. A cry for fair-play will reach the most lawless mob. "It's not fair," goes home to everybody. Different nations have different notions as to the way of it, but fair-play for himself and others is the demand of every man's heart.

Justice requires that we should take steady care every day to yield his rights to every person we come in contact with; that is, to do unto others as we would that they should do unto us: to hurt nobody by word or deed; therefore we must

show gentleness to the persons of others, courtesy to their words and deference to their opinions, because these things are due. We must be true and just in all our dealing. Veracity, fidelity, simplicity and sincerity must therefore direct our words. Candour, appreciation, discrimination must guide our thoughts. Fair-dealing, honesty, integrity must govern our actions.

This Justice to the persons, property, words, thoughts and actions of others, I must show to my parents, teachers, rulers and all who are set in authority over me and over my country because it is their right and my duty. In the same way I must be just to the words, thoughts and actions of my brothers, sisters, friends and neighbours and all others who are my equals, in my own words, thoughts and actions. I must be just too in word, thought and deed to servants, to all people who are employed by me or mine, to all who work for me whether in my own home or in the world. I must be fair, that is, just, to all persons whose opinions and ways of life differ from my own, even to all who offend against the laws of God and man. It is my duty to be just in this way to the persons, the reputation and the property of all other persons so far as I have anything to do with them. Therefore I must bear no malice nor hatred in my heart, must keep my hands from picking and stealing, my tongue from evil-speaking, lying and slandering, and I must not covet nor desire other men's goods, but must learn and labour truly to get mine own living and do my duty in that state of life into which it hath pleased God to call me.

It is quite plain that to think fairly, speak truly and act justly towards all persons at all times and on all occasions, which is our duty, is a matter requiring earnest thought and consideration; is, in fact, the study of a life-time. We might be a little discouraged by the thought of how much is due to us from all our neighbours everywhere if it were not that Justice is within us, ready to rule; that the lords-in-waiting of his court wait upon his bidding, that candour, sincerity, simplicity, integrity, fidelity and the rest, are our servants at command, and that what we have to do is to find our way about in the Circuit of Justice, to recognise the dues of others as they come before us, and behold, we have in hand always that coin of the realm of Justice wherewith to



pay the dues of all our neighbours. It is a great thing to know this; to be able to walk about wealthy in the streets of our Mansoul, and to know that we have wherewith to pay our way on all hands. Many a poor soul goes a pauper; he has all the coinage of Justice but does not know it, and therefore does not use it. He is blind because he fixes his eyes all the time on his own rights and other people's duties; therefore he cannot see other people's rights and his own duties; that is, he cannot be just. You ask—have we then no rights ourselves, and have other people no duties towards us? We have indeed rights, precisely the same rights as other people, and when we learn to think of ourselves as one of the rest, with just the same rights as other people and no more, to whom others owe just such duties as we owe to them and no more, we shall, as it were, get our lives in focus and see things as they are. There is a wonderful parable in the story of the man who first was blind and saw no man, and then had his eyes partially opened so that he saw men as trees walking, and at last was blessed with the full vision of other people as they are.

## II.

I daresay many of us heard sorrowfully the story of that young German officer who fell lately in a duel on the eve of his marriage-day. It is not so long ago since in England also men thought it right to wipe out a slight offence by the death of the offender or of the offended. Now we understand that it is not lawful to hurt anybody by deed. Masters may not beat their apprentices, mistresses their maids; in fact we try as a nation to make all persons treat the persons of others with respect. Children, too, have gained by this truer sense of Justice to the persons of others. Their little bodies were at one time subject to many whippings, "pinches, nips and bobs," from those in authority over them. It was thought quite wholesome for them to be fed on bread and water, or put in a dark closet when they were naughty. But now their persons receive much cherishing love, and they are rarely beaten. This is because people begin to see and are eager to do all that Justice requires. There still are countries where people do not see the harm of hurting others. Most of us have read lately of a bandit in Southern Italy, who owned to having killed twenty-seven persons—not that he wanted their

money or goods, and not that they had injured him—but because a relative of theirs had, years before, killed his brother. This man believed that his vengeance was fair-play. He had a notion of Justice, but a misguided one; and this shows us how necessary it is that instruction should help us to think clearly upon the difficult question of what is fair. There are few things that people make more mistakes about.

To think fairly about the personal rights of others requires a good deal of knowledge as well as judgment. But we can all arrive at some right conclusions by calling in the help of Imagination. That boy is none the less a good fellow who realizes his mother's love for the beauty of neatness; who recollects that the maids have enough to do with their regular work; that enough work makes people happy, while too much spoils their lives; and, thinking upon these things, is careful about such little matters as wiping his feet when he comes in, confining his messes to his own den, avoiding leaving tracks of soil and tear and damage to show where he has been, because he knows that this sort of recklessness spoils the comfort and increases the labour of other people. The young lady who thinks of the persons of others will not hurry her dressmaker for a new party frock which must be ready by such a date if the dressmaker's assistants have to sit up until midnight to get it done. She uses her Imagination, and sees, on the one hand, girls with pale faces and tired eyes; and, on the other, bright girls sewing with interest and pleasure at the pretty frock. Indeed, this sort of care not to do bodily hurt to other people should guide us in many of the affairs of life—should, for example, forbid us to buy at the cheapest shops; for most likely some manner of work-people had been "sweated" to produce the cheap article. A fair sense of the value of things helps us much in leading the just life.

But there are other ways of doing bodily hurt to the people we have to do with than by over-working, under-feeding or directly misusing them. If you hurt people in mind they suffer in body, and for this reason it is that we should not push in a crowd to get the best place—should not jostle others to get the best share of what is going, even if it be a good sermon, should give place gently in walking the streets, should make room on public seats or in railway



carriages for others who wish to sit. If we are ungentle in such small matters, we may not do such direct hurt to the persons of others as would make a surgeon necessary, but we produce a state of mental fret and discomfort which is really more wearing. We all know how soothing is the presence of a gentle person in a room; a person whose tone of voice and whose movements show that he has imagination, that he realizes the presence of other people whose comfort he would not willingly destroy. The Daemons at whose instigation we are unjust to the persons of others are usually Thoughtlessness, Selfishness and Cruelty.

Bearing in mind how easy it is to hurt other people's bodies through their minds, we begin to see that a word may hurt as much as a blow, that a want of courtesy may do as much harm to another as want of food. Once we see this, we are courteous to the words of others; we listen, we do not contradict, we try to understand, and when other persons express their opinions, however much they may differ from those in which we have been brought up, we keep ourselves from violence in thought and word, and listen with deference where we cannot agree. Then, when we state our own notions with gentleness and modesty, we shall find that they are gently received.

We may not run a-muck in the world! To go head down, feet foremost, for all we are worth, and run into whatever comes in our way, may be inviting, but it does not do. Nobody is born a Hooligan; that lordly Justice within our hearts is always down upon us for the claims of other people and having considered the persons of these others, we awake to the fact that they, all of them, have claims upon us in regard to their character and reputation. Most of us know that we are not free to think what we like about our parents or other Heads, of our school, household or office. Some of us do not let ourselves think disagreeable things about our brothers and sisters, servants, or other inmates of our home. There are still a few of us who are careful about our thoughts regarding acquaintances and outside relations; but, having got thus far, most of us feel ourselves free to think what we please about the characters of outsiders, whether it be of the man who makes our shoes, or the statesman who helps to govern us, or of the boy or girl in another set.

But Justice, holding court within, ordains that we shall think fair thoughts of everybody, near or far, above or below us. When we are minded to think fair, he has his group of Lords-in-Waiting, whose business it is to attend to this very matter and to come at call when they are wanted. Candour is at our side, and presents us with glasses of unusual power, to bring far things near and make dim things clear. Wearing these, we can see round the corner, to the other side of the question. We see that Mr. Jones may be disagreeable, but all the same that he is trying to do his duty. That boy wore candid spectacles who wrote home of his Master, "Temple is a beast, but he is a just beast." His candid schoolmate sees that Brown is not a sneak, but a timid boy anxious to get on. Candour points out that Miss Jenkins' annoying remark was not spiteful but merely awkward: that even public men have a conscientious wish to do their best; that the parson probably tries to practise what he preaches; that even the much abused plumber probably takes an interest in his work and cares to make a good job of it; and that, even supposing the other person has no right intention and makes no worthy effort, he is all the more to be pitied, and, if possible, helped, because in this case things must have been against him all his life. Candour shows us that a Frenchman, a German, a Russian, has qualities which John Bull would be the better for; that a Whig or a Tory, whichever it may be, has something to teach his opponent. But Candour does not take sides. He does not say to himself, "*My* family, *my* country, *my* party, *my* school, is pretty sure to be in the right always and is altogether the best going," because he always sees that the other side, whether it be family, school, or country, may have something to say worth hearing. Fair-play all round is his watchword, and that makes him in the end the most staunch supporter of the side he belongs to.

Opposed to Candour is Prejudice, who also hands you a pair of spectacles, but these are not clear and open to the light of day, but are rose-coloured or black, green, or yellow, as the case may be. You cannot see persons as they are through these specacles, but one person is black, another rosy as the dawn, another a sickly green or an evil yellow, according as affection, envy, hatred, or jealousy creates a prejudice in our minds, through which we cannot judge justly



of the character of another. Persons cannot be candid who allow themselves to be prejudiced either in favour of the persons they like or against those they dislike. Indeed, dislike is itself Prejudice; and true love is quite clear-sighted and candid. There is enough beauty in the persons we love, enough right in the causes we care for, for us to be able to let the light of day upon them and dispense with rose-coloured spectacles. We shall not have our love for our country called Jingoism if we love her with a candid love. She is great and glorious, able to bear the light of day. But what about the "candid friend," the person who sees that England is going to ruin; that we ourselves are poor things, made up on the whole of a single fault of character? England, like other countries, has need to go softly; we probably have that fault of character, we may be priggish or lazy, or selfish, or what not; but where our "candid friend" errs is in taking a part for the whole and magnifying one fault or weakness, so that there is nothing else to be seen. We have something to learn from him though he is not agreeable; but, for ourselves, we must use the spectacles of candour which bring the whole landscape into due relief.

Candour never acts alone; on his right is that other servitor of my Lord Justice—Respect. No one can be just who does not follow the Apostolic precept—"honour all men." We are inclined to object that we do honour those who are worthy of honour; but that is another way of saying that we single out people here and there of whom we shall think justly; but every man and every child calls for our honour, not only because of the common brotherhood that is between us, seeing that we are all the children of one Father, but because Love and Justice, Intellect, Reason, Imagination, all the lofty rulers of Mansoul, are present, however dormant, in every man we meet. It is by honouring all men that we find out how worthy they are of honour. We may see the faults of one another in the white light of candour, but that same white light will shew us that a fault, however trying, is by no means the whole person, and that there are beautiful qualities in the poorest nature to call forth our reverence. There is never a daily paper but reveals the unsuspected glory of some human soul. Honour begets gentleness to

the persons of others, courteous attention to their words, however dull and prosy they may seem to us, and deference towards their opinions, however foolish we may think them. The person whose rash opinions are received with deference is ready to hear the other side of the question and becomes open to conviction.

Why do we not all honour one another? Because our vision is blinded by a graven image of ourselves. We are so taken up with thinking about ourselves that we cannot see the beauty in those about us, though we may be able to admire people removed from us. Conceit and self-absorption are the Dæmons which hinder us from giving that honour to all men which is their due.

See, now, how the Servitors of Justice stand by one another! Candour, we have seen, is accompanied by Respect, and Respect is supported by Discernment. People talk about being deceived in this one and that, and we hear much of disappointed affection and of unworthy friends; but all this is quite unnecessary. In every House of Heart there stands that modest Servitor of Justice whom we call Discernment. Give him free play, unhindered by Vanity or Prejudice, and he will bring you a pretty accurate report of the character of everyone with whom you come in contact. He will show you, alike, faults and virtues in another, the good and the evil. More, he will hold up his glass to your own Mansoul, and enable you to see that though such an one has virtues as well as faults, yet the faults are of a kind that would be a snare and temptation to you, and that therefore that person is not fitted for your friendship. For lack of Discernment in character many a person makes shipwreck of life and unites himself to another, not for goodness' sake, but because the two have the same failings. We owe honour to all men, but Discernment steps in to help us to do Justice to ourselves, and choose for our intimacy, or service, those whose characters should be a strength to our own.

Lest Discernment in his zeal should become too keen to see that which is amiss, another servitor of Justice, exquisite and delicate as Ariel, is at hand to stand or go with him. This is Appreciation, whose business it is to weigh and consider, duly and delicately, the merits, the fine qualities, of a person, a country, a cause, of a book or a picture. Appreciation is a



delightful inmate of the House of Heart, and is continually bringing an ingathering of joy. It is so good and pleasant to notice a trait of unselfishness here, of delicacy there, of honour elsewhere; to observe and treasure the record of the beauty of perfectness in any man's work, whether the work be a great poem or the sweeping of a room. It is such a happy thing to discriminate peculiar beauties in another country and find traits of character that differ from our own in people of another nationality. Life has no greater joy-giver than Appreciation, and though this Appreciation is the due of others and our duty towards them, we get more than we give, for there is no purer pleasure than that of seeing the good in everything, the beauty in everyone. Depreciation is the sneering Dæmon who goes about to oust this genial servitor of Justice. There are people for whom neither the weather nor their dinner, their abode nor their company is ever quite good enough. You remark when they come down, "What a beautiful morning!" They answer, "Yes, it is fine *to-day*," with a depreciatory reference to a day that is past. "What a nice woman Mrs. Jones is!" "Yes, if she did not wear such dreadful garments." "I enjoyed the Black Forest so much." "Oh, did you; there's always such a lot of Germans in the hotels." And so goes on the depreciatory person who goes through the world like a cuttle-fish, ready at a touch to blacken the waters about him. It is well to remember that Depreciation is Injustice. The depreciative remark may be true so far as it goes, but it is false in spirit, because it takes a part for the whole, a single defect for many excellencies. Depreciation may be inspired by the monster Envy, who is perpetually going about to put stumbling-blocks in the way of Justice, and belittle the claims of others, or it may arise from Thoughtlessness, which is but a form of Self-occupation. Many of the crude and unworthy criticisms we hear of books, pictures, speeches, a song, a party, arise from the latter cause. We would not allow ourselves to depreciate if we recollected that Appreciation is one part of the Justice we owe to the characters and the works of others.

## ALFRED.

(A Play for Children.)

[The scenes take place for the most part in the house of Earl Cedric, where Alfred is being educated. Elfrida, a ward of Cedric, is a woman of refinement, and exercises much influence over Alfred, encouraging him and suggesting the different ways in which he can help his country. Elfrida is to be betrothed to Ruan, Prince of Cornwall. Unable to come in person, Ruan sends Hengor, one of his noblemen, as proxy. Hengor proves to be a traitor, and plans to assassinate the King and to carry off Elfrida for himself. This is discovered by Editha, Elfrida's tirewoman. The King is saved and Hengor slain. In the last scene Ruan arrives in person to fetch his bride.]

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

*Ethelbert.* King of Wessex.  
*Alfred.* Ethelbert's brother.  
*Earl Cedric.*  
*Beric.* Cedric's Son.  
*Beowulf.* Warder.  
*Rolf.* Beowulf's son.  
*Bishop of Wimborne.*  
*Ruan.* Prince of Cornwall.  
*Hengor.* Cornish nobleman.  
*The Lady Elfrida.* Cedric's ward.  
*Editha.* Elfrida's tire-woman.  
*Followers of Hengor.*  
*Followers of Ruan.*

## ACT I. SCENE I.

*Evening. Earl Cedric's Hall. Enter Alfred and Beric.*

*Beric.* Rarely have we seen such sport. The poor beast which bore me is well nigh spent, and I must look to it his food is warm and good to-night.

*Alfred.* Rightly speak you! Did you see the stag as he left the comb, how proudly he set forth upon that race which was to prove his last?

*Beric.* Aye! grand he looked, and scornfully he shook his antlers before he fled across the heather. (*Enter Beowulf.*) Ha, Beowulf, you look sad for such a cheery day. Have you aught of ill to tell, my friend?